

REMARKS

The examiner has rejected claim 6 as being unpatentable over Heilskov '628 in view Henley. Applicant respectfully submits that Heilskov does not show a ladder. Rather, the Heilskov patent is directed to a net. According to the American Heritage Dictionary, the definition of a ladder is: "an often portable structure consisting of two long sides crossed by parallel rungs, used to climb up and down." According to the Miriam Webster Dictionary, a ladder is defined as: "a structure for climbing up or down consisting essentially of two long side pieces joined at intervals by cross pieces to be used for climbing". Thus it is apparent that neither Heilskov nor Henley is directed to a ladder as this term is used in the common English language. Furthermore, the cross pieces of the Heilskov landing net consists of flexible pieces of rope. It is clearly apparent that much greater stability is provided by the plurality of platform steps as defined in claim 6 as compared to flexible rope. Furthermore, a platform is defined as a raised, horizontal, flat surface. The cross ropes of Heilskov cannot be considered horizontal flat surfaces. Examiner further suggests that it would be obvious to use the thermoplastic material described in Henley to facilitate shrinking to act as a stop member to hold in position the steps on the ropes. First of all, the Henley patent is directed to an entirely different area of art. It is not directed to a ladder or any kind of climbing device. The only reference to a sleeve or film of thermoplastic material is at column 8, lines 14-16. It clearly states there that the purpose of the thermoplastic material is to hold the sleeve in place. The thermoplastic material does not in any way act to hold a cross platform in place. It is therefore submitted that there is no suggestion in neither Heilskov nor Henley to combine the two to arrive at a ladder that comprises a plurality of platform steps held in position on the ropes by a thermoplastic sleeve. For greater clarity, claim 6 has been amended to specify that it is a plurality of rigid platform steps. The examiner is therefore asked to withdraw this rejection.

The examiner rejected claims 1 and 4 as being unpatentable over Heilskov '708 in view of Heilskov '628. The examiner asserts that Heilskov '708 shows the

claimed ladder with the exception of the heat-shrinkable sleeving. Applicant concedes that the Heilskov '708 patent does disclose a ladder, however, there is no suggestion anywhere in the '708 patent of using thermoplastic heat-shrinkable sleeving. The '708 patent was filed in 1970, 13 years before the '628 patent application was filed. There is no motivation in either of these Heilskov patents to combine the two to arrive at the current invention. As discussed previously, Heilskov '628 is not directed to a ladder having a plurality of rigid platform steps. In addition, the tubular elements 18 and 19 as shown in Figure 2 form a cross-like structure to maintain the position of the vertical and horizontal ropes. They do not act as stop members to support the weight of an individual on the ladder. As described in column 2, lines 45-49, spreader means generally designated as 15 are used to maintain the lateral spacing between the vertical or longitudinal extending lines. There is no suggestion in the '628 patent that a heat-shrinkable tubular sleeving can be used as a downward stop for each step. The examiner is therefore asked to reconsider this objection.

In response to the examiner's rejection of claim 5 as being unpatentable over Heilskov '708 and Heilskov '628, the arguments made above with respect to claim 4 apply here also. It is again submitted that Heilskov does not disclose a ladder in which rigid platforms are held in their vertical position through the use of a heat-shrinkable sleeve.

In view of the amendments to the claims and the arguments presented herein, it is submitted that the claims currently on file are in a condition for allowance. The examiner is therefore asked to reconsider this application.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "U. McGuinness", written over a horizontal line.

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